Payment of Arrears to the sugarcane growers

722. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the total sugar production in the country during the year 1986-87;

(b) the total price of sugarcane supplied by the sugarcane growers to all the sugar mills in the country;

(c) the amount of sugarcane price still not being paid to the suppliers, and

(d) by when the arrears of sugarcane are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT): (a) Till 15th July, 1987, the country had produced 83.82 lakhs tonnes of sugar in the current season.

(b) and (c) As per the information available in the Ministry, sugar factories had purchased sugarcane worth Rs. 2039 crores till the 15th July, 1987, out of which Rs. 1993.4 crores had already been paid by the mills, leaving a balance of Rs. 45.6 crores nearly. The arrears constitute about 2.2% of the total.

(d) Ensuring expeditious payment of cane price is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments who have the necessary powers and field organisations to enforce such payments. The Central Government monitors the position and advises the State Governments from time to time in the matter. The State Chief Ministers have been addressed in the matter. On its part, the Central Government has taken various policy measures during the last couple of years to improve the economic viability of the industry to enable it to make cane payments expeditiously.

As a result of the Government measures, the arrears at 2.2% are low keeping in view the fact that sugar production is likely to be a record one this season and the value of sugarcane purchased being the highest so far. The arrears are expected to be reduced considerably by the close of the season.

सिंहभूम जिले में सोने के भंडार

723. श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या अभी हाल ही में बिहार के सिंहभूम जिले में सोने के कुछ भंडार पाये गये हैं ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इन खानों का और आगे विकास करने के लिए क्या कदम उठाये जा रहे हैं ?

इस्पात और खान मंत्रालय में खान विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती रामदुलारी सिन्हा) : (क) और (ख) बिहार के सिंहभूम जिले में हाल में कोई नए स्वर्ण निक्षेप नहीं पाए गए हैं । हां, सिंहभूम जिले में पुरानी स्वर्ण खदान कुन्दरकोचा में खनिज गवेषण निगम लि० द्वारा गवेषण कार्य किया जा रहा है । गवेषण कार्य जारी है और निक्षेपों का वास्तविक आकलन, गवेषण कार्य पूरा होने पर आंकड़ों का मूल्यांकन कर लिए जाने के बाद ही, संभव होगा ।

Haldia Fertilizer Plant

724. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Rs. 500 crores fertilizer plant of the Haldia Unit of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation is lying idle and more than 2500 workers have been left without job;

(b) what are the reasons for closure of the industry; and

(c) whether any steps have been taken by Government to revive the closed unit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) to (c) Haldia Fertilizer Project is still a project and has not started commercial production. As there were frequent equipment problems during the commissioning of the plant, Government decided in October, 1986, to stop commissioning activities without any retrenchment of workers. It has, however, been decided to undertake an end-to-end survey of the project for which consultants are being engaged.

Indebtedness of tribal people

725. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that indebtedness among the tribals has increased inspite of the implementation of the Integrated Tribal Development Projects; and

(b) if so, whether Government are coming forward with liberal schemes to help the tribals to improve their own standard of living?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) The Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of Planning Commission recently conducted an evaluation of Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs) on sample tribal household basis in 10 ITDPs in 7 States, according to which the extent of indebtedness had tended to increase between 1975-76 to 1982-83. However this was primarily due to shift in the pattern of borrowing from short-term consumption loan from money lenders to long and medium term borrowing from Banks and Cooperatives productive purposes.

(b) Apart from the IRDP and lending at concessional rates by Banks, the ITDPs are taking up economic and welfare schemes to improve the tribals' standard of living. Economic programmes are taken up in agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, animal husbandry, handlooms, cottage industries, minor irrigation and in other sectors like small business etc. Emphasis is given on housing, education, health and drinking water. The States have been advised to implement social and protective legislation in the fields of land alienation, debt relief, etc.

Import of edible oils

726. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any measures to check the quality of the edible oils imported from other countries; and

(b) what other steps have been taken by Government to avoid the import of sub-standard edible oils?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) The import contract signed by State Trading Corporation with foreign suppliers provides for the detailed quality and specifications to which the oil should conform. In the case of refined oils, quality is final as per samples drawn from ships tanks at the time of loading and ceritfied by surveyors/analysts nominated by buyers at the sellers expense. Arrangements exist to test the imported oils both at the loading as also at the discharge port to check that oil is as per prescribed specifications. In addition the Government have also provided for drawing of samples, analysis thereof from either laboratories of Public Health Authority or from different Government laboratories approved by them and clearance of the oils for human consumption by Port Health Authorities who clear it from the PFA Act angle before the customs are permitted to discharge oil into land tank of the buyers P.H.A. clearance is a must for refined as well as crude oils. In addition officers of the Directorate of Vanaspati, Vegetable